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public access channel in Biddeford for about 15 years, covering issues that the local for-profit media simply were not interested or were simply ideologically opposed to covering; for instance a weekly labor show.

We have had a system of media that's organized around the profit motive. The Radio Act of '27 was brought up by Rob Rosenthal. Bob McChesney has written a rather excellent book about that about 15 years ago, 10 years ago, which I would recommend to the Commissioners. It's a sad recitation of a battle lost a long time ago with very little public input, but the track that we're on was laid back then.

I heard a rather well-read public speaker give a talk recently, and he bemoaned the labor movements never having -- never having tried to get a nationwide media outlet. Well, actually, they did. WCFL out of Chicago, the voice of farmer labor, and the forerunner of the FCC shut that down, took their power away, restricted their hours of operation because they were owned by the wrong people. They were owned by people in the labor movement, and their perspective was focused more on social and economic justice than this system will permit.

Sadly, that is still the case today. And we heard a lot here tonight about charity, and I was reminded

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of -- probably getting -- yeah, I'm out of time. Never mind.

MR. ENSSLIN: Two seconds.

MR. RHAMES: I'm all done.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Now you're done. Thank you, Richard.

Roy Ghim?

MR. GHIM: That's right.

MR. ENSSLIN: Roy, you've got two minutes.

MR. GHIM: Thanks you for enduring this marathon forum. I don't own nor am I a station manager, so I can spare you the usual company script.

My name is Roy Ghim, and I'm a special educator. I moved here from Omaha, Nebraska two weeks ago. I am here, instead of sleeping in my bed, because I'm concerned, like you, over what has happened to accountability of those who program the airwaves.

I've heard a lot of similar scripts tonight from the larger broadcasters, as you have. They don't answer the questions you raised recently in a Times op. ed. piece. Real substantive local news and issues, some that deal with race, minority issues, issues of class, the debate on the Iraq war, et cetera, are largely missing from the many bigger news outlets. But does

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that mean that they're evil? No, I wouldn't say that. But first, it does mean that much of the discourse to ensure a properly running democracy, one that counts on an informed electorate, is in trouble.

An indication of our democracy in trouble, less than half of eligible voters actually vote. Second, it means that they, for whatever reason, do not want to answer your tough questions, but instead throw out the tired old government is the problem, not the solution rhetoric. Of course, as a country, elected politicians who took that viewpoint, it's no wonder that Hurricane Katrina victims that were left behind for days as government forgot their role and to serve and protect the people.

I want to challenge broadcasters here tonight to answer the FCC Commissioner. He's asked some relevant questions. For example, on the average, only 8 percent of local news-- TV newscasts contain any coverage of local races, including those for the House of Representatives. Why is that? Why do stations who make so much using the public airwaves so plainly fail to educate viewers on the issues facing them.

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you.

MR. GHIM: I'm quoting you verbatim.

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Roy.

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(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Liz Wright? Are you Liz?

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Commissioners. I know you must be very tired. This, however, is probably the most important part of this because the paid-for-profit representatives are no longer here. Those of us --

(Audience applause.)

-- who are here have high numbers because we had to go to work, we had obligations and so got here late. So I thank you for listening and being awake as I make these comments.

My name is Liz Wright, and I am an associate professor of communication at Rivier College, but I'm speaking to you as a resident of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and a co-host, co-producer of Portsmouth At Large on Portsmouth Community Radio. We air Monday at 10 o'clock every week, every week of the year, and we are nonprofit talk.

And you have heard many nonprofit organizations get up here and tell you about how the broadcasters had been so generous to them. And we, too, have many organizations. Many large organizations come on our show, but we also have many, many small nonprofit organizations come on.

We go and search these people out, and when we tell

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them we'd like them to be on our show and that they have an hour to be on our show so they can tell us about what their concerns are, how they're addressing the public, what needs they have for funds, what needs they have for volunteers, they can't believe it. And they give us huge thank you's and say if it weren't for you, if it weren't for Portsmouth Community Radio, if it weren't for the low-power FM, we wouldn't be heard.

So, yes, many of the not profits are heard on many of the broadcasting stations, but not all, and I want to say that low-power FM is extremely important. And I want you to really realize that the low-power FM really is the power of democracy.

Thank you very much.

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Liz.

Scott Segee. Are you Scott? Are you Greg Dismore?

MR. DISMORE: Yes.

MR. ENSSLIN: Greg, you have two minutes.

MR. DISMORE: Hi. I want to thank you all for being here, and I'd like to especially thank you for your service, and for everybody here who is working so hard. This transcriber person was here when I first got here a long time ago.

(Audience applause.)

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My name is Greg Dismore, and I represent myself. I'm here to voice my concern over further media consolidation. And I'll say, just straight off from my head, it is really difficult to articulate what I feel. I'm humbled by what I heard here tonight -- what I have heard. And I really have an appreciation for how difficult this is, how difficult it is to express what I want to say, what I'm looking for.

Well here is what I wrote. The work that I do allows me, on occasion, to listen to the radio. I have discovered that we who tune in to specific programming, programs of interest, are known as appointment listeners. My radio program appointments have diminished with the advent of the media programs piped in from afar. I have found them to be, for the most part, bombastic and sensational. There is a sameness, a banality to them, as well as, in my experience, some of them have varying degrees of fidelity to the truth.

Geez, I have 15 seconds left. There's lost opportunity. What are we missing? That's my concern. I really do appreciate everyone's service. Thank you everybody.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Greg.

Ani St. Amand?

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Leigh Arsenault?

Donna Binder?

Jeff Stevenson?

Well, Barton, we're back to you.

MR. BRUCE: Thank you.

MR. ENSSLIN: You have two minutes.

MR. BRUCE: I'm not sure where to start. There is so much, I just have to pick something. I'm not really here talking about the local things, although I'm very sympathetic to it, and I'm not really sure I know what the solution is, but I'll tell you what my problem is.

I won't watch the brain rot TV that's out there on the over-the-air channels, and I certainly won't pay the outrageous fees to the cable companies who have an obscene profit for doing very little. And I don't like having a news system that's supposed to be the checks and balance about what's going on in our government basically giving a one-sided view vetted by the White House, or at least the vice-president's office, before it comes out with anything.

There's many smoking guns about many things that have happened that we all should have known about, and the mass media doesn't get it over here. People in Europe may see it. CNN may play it to Europe or other parts of the world, does not play it here. You can

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start with 9-11. You could start with the child prostitution rings with kids coming out of the Catholic orphanage in the West. And the big publisher in that state, who himself is probably guilty of things, who, if you were press or any government agency trying to investigate it out there or in Washington, your job would be canceled. And all the politicians in Washington who these kids were being flown in for and given late night tours of the White House, no one went in jail except one pimp. And the press is not all over this.

The press is not all over all kinds of things that are going on, and even Amy Goodman, who touches a lot of things that most of them won't touch, will not touch a lot of the hotter buttons. We're not being well served, and it's democracy that's at risk when we are not getting the information we want.

We have the brain rot TV that's an insult. You can get better things looking at DEBKA files from Israeli intelligence retirees who are leaking little tidbits than you can watching the media over here.

Thanks a lot.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thanks.

I'd like to call five more names to come down and

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stand in line on this side. Asher Platts, Ralph Ardito, Victoria Chicon, Chris Clark, and David Robertiello.

And the next person to speak on this side is Caroline Losneck. Caroline, are you here?

Is Gary Dixon here? Okay, Gary.

MR. DIXON: Hi.

MR. ENSSLIN: You have two minutes.

MR. DIXON: Thank you. My name is Gary, and I have been a professional broadcaster for well over half my life. I love radio. I love television. I don't like what it's become, so I'm going to ask the Commission questions which I know you can't answer in less than two minutes. Who eliminated the Fairness Doctrine? Who came up with the idea that HDTV has to be mandatory by 2009? Who all of a sudden said, gosh, radio stations don't have to be accountable? All they need to do is send in their public access file after three or five years, and the fee, and we'll give them a license again?

Don't we count for anything since radio is a public trust, and we're supposed to have a say in the programming? Sure, we can write, but that doesn't necessarily mean that the people who own the stations are going to listen.

There are so many wonderful ideas for programming,

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both television and radio, and nobody wants to take advantage because it's easier to take a feed from a satellite, syndicated service, or whatever. Don't you have any say in what we would like, or is it just business as usual?

Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Gary.

Andrea Mueillo?

MS. MUEILLO: Thank you.

MR. ENSSLIN: Andrea, you have two minutes.

MS. MUEILLO: Andrea Mueillo, present to speak as a mother, a military widow, and I was a press reporter for the Navy Wive's Club. And can we all agree that we can disagree? The pen being mightier than the sword has power to communicate far and wide. The media is alive and controlled at the top. Let it be written, tell it how it really is. Investigate and reveal real facts, not half truths. Report full and complete statistics. Police logs, that is public information. Report often on jail issues, and uncover true stories in our courts. Help uncover corruption in politics and courts, police departments, hidden abuse in jails. How do I know this? I'm an ex-police woman.

There is good and bad in everything.

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Accountability and support for we the people isn't too much to ask. It's time for a change. The first step is yours, to volcanically erupt a new media. Help us uncover corruption. The biased reporting of one side has destroyed people. It is a matter of public interest. Report both sides of the story, and when you leave here, remember us, and have an open mind.

Thank you very much.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Andrea.

The names I'd like to call to come down and stand on this side by this microphone are Lawrence Baldwin, Louise Rocha-McCarthy, Fred Miller, Warren Finney, Emily Michaud, Richard Dirck, Susan Danforth, and Debbie Mathewson.

And the next speaker on this side is Louise Linda Commeau. Is Linda here?

Asher Platts?

MR. PLATTS: I'm Asher Platts.

MR. ENSSLIN: Asher, you've got two minutes.

MR. PLATTS: I want to thank you for standing up this whole time.

The media is the public's conduit to information; information that they need in order to make informed decisions about their daily lives, from product

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purchases to political decisions. When all the local newspapers, local TV affiliates, radio stations and cable companies are owned by large conglomerates, with vested interests in making sure that the public remains uninformed, there is a fundamental breakdown in our democracy.

For local elections, I see no coverage of anything that happens. I'm in Gorham, I'm not in Portland. The only time I ever see anything on a corporate-owned news station, or anywhere on the airwaves, is if a road is washed out or a car crash happened. I never see anything on local government, except for on the cable access, which people without cable don't get.

Now, what of this accusation that I've leveled that media conglomerates have a vested interest in keeping the Americans ignorant and easily manipulated is while General Electric owns NBC, and also owns subsidiaries that drill for oil, GE Transportation, and mine for coal, and a subsidiary that manufacture military equipment, GE Aviation.

Now, GE Aviation makes part for Lockheed Martin Boeing, McDonald-Douglas, all of which build planes and helicopters, the Apache, Blackhawk, et cetera, et cetera. They have a vested interest in profits that come from war. They have a vested interest in going to

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war.

(Audience applause.)

Now, if the media is our conduit to information, can we really expect that a station that is owned by conglomerates that also owns military manufacturing plants -- can we really expect to have fair and balanced discussion of these things; or with oil drilling, can we expect to have a fair and intelligent discussion in the media about our energy policy?

I knew there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before we invaded, even though the American press was reporting otherwise. How is it possible that I, a citizen, knew this even though the corporate media didn't?

COMMISSIONER COPPS: Asher, sorry, your time is time is up.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thanks.

Ralph Ardito? Is Ralph here?

Victoria? Victoria Chicon?

Chris Clark?

Victoria, are you here? Victoria, you have two minutes.

MS. CHICON: Buenos noches. Thank you for stay too late everyone. I am film maker from Peru. I went from

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the film 16 millimeters and 35 millimeters to the digital now. I need to learn a lot.

When I came to Maine nine years ago to take care of my grandson, I was looking to do the same things I did in my country. The films helped my community. With my -- with my poor English at that time, I read the newspapers -- the free newspaper from the grocery store, and I found the community to be. Later I realize that each town -- almost each town here in United States, has a community station. I thought what a wise idea they got. The people have here a right to express, beside the commercial stations.

Thanks to the community TV and public access, I have a privilege to produce and direct the only one TV magazine Spanish here in Maine, Nosotros, We The People, is one hour TV program, is on the air Saturdays and Sundays by Channel 4 and Channel 2 in Portland.

The Spanish speakers community, which is growing very fast, and the other community from Portland who wants to learn and practice their Spanish, can see Nosotros, We The People. We want to show everybody who we are and why we are here. We want to --

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Victoria. I'm afraid your time is up. Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

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MR. ENSSLIN: Chris Clark?

MR. CLARK: I'm Chris Clark. I live in Portland, Maine. I'd like to thank you for coming. I'm sure you're as tired as I am. I hope I can still be coherent at this point.

It was wonderful hearing all the local stations and broadcasters and nonprofits talk about how important it is to have public service announcements and fundraisers. I think the two points that we're missing in that is that, yes, corporate stations do do that, but local stations would do that as well, and if not any more. A study that was commissioned by the FCC in 2004 actually showed a that 25 percent greater local content on stations that were locally owned versus stations that were corporately owned. So it's not like we were going to lose that.

All this testifying that it's so wonderful they're doing all these things, it's not that that stuff would get lost if that stuff was more locally owned. I think the real issue is media consolidation. And unlike other businesses and monopolies, like where you're talking about Home Depot shutting out local hardware stores, the difference when you're talking, especially with broadcast news, is that there's a certain amount of bandwidth. Not every station can be on, and the more

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companies that own fewer stations, the harder it is for other stations and other voices and other diversity to be on the airwaves.

So I think it's really important. The point I mostly want to make is that we own the public airwaves. It belongs to the public. It's the FCC's responsibility to the public to make sure that that diversity and that ownership is spread around to lots of people, not amongst a few companies.

In Portland since I've been here, the three local TV stations are now -- used to be all privately owned, locally, are now owned nationally. The editorials you now hear is Mark Hyman who talks about national issues, conservative, and doesn't ever talk about local editorials. So we've lost that local content.

So please, don't liberalize the laws, and don't allow any more media consolidation.

Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Chris.

Now, I'd like to call the last group of names to go down to this microphone to stand in line, and then these folks will speak next.

But that group is Michael Vaughan, Anthony Armstrong, Nancy Akers, Nancy Bracket, Joel Theriault,

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Pat Bousant, and Jon Hinck on this side.

And that -- I will have called all the names on the list then, and now we'll just hear from the people who are here. And the last person on this side was -- to speak would be David Robertiello. David, are you here? Is that you David?

If not, on this side, Lawrence Baldwin. Is Lawrence here? Lawrence, you have two minutes.

MR. BALDWIN: I'm Lawrence Baldwin. I have come in from Springfield, Vermont. My one objection to so much of the news, both on the radio and on TV, is the hate talk that seems to be prevalent. Their idea of talking about the candidates, they get involved in calling them names, and that doesn't -- it's not productive, and it's just -- it's sensational, but it doesn't allow us to really know anything about the candidates.

That's my piece.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Lawrence.

Louise Rocha-McCarthy? Louise, you have two minutes.

MS. ROCHA-McCARTHY: Hi. My name is Louise Rocha-McCarthy. I'm an interpreter and a translator. My presence here is probably irrelevant given today's Supreme Court decision that has relegated Brown versus

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Board of Education to the ash can of history. So in future, without a Congressional remedy, minority points of view will neither be required or solicited; however, I'm a Latino, one of 40 million Latinos in this country, and I'm part of an already segregated minority.

We Latinos in Maine -- yes, we are everywhere -- have to rely on our national Latino owned networks to hear news that matters to us and depend entirely on Channel 4 and on WMPG, the Community Radio station for two hours a week.

We recently endured a severe storm in Maine on Patriot's Day. Some of our schools have over 50 languages. Thanks to the English language media, I knew the storm was coming; not so many other Latinos. I spent a lot of time calling families. Many people in the refugee and immigrant community were unprepared. Other than the community nonprofit television and radio, we don't have access to emergency information. If that storm had struck in February, I'd be dressed in mourning clothes before you.

We are invisible until a lawn isn't mowed or the restaurant cleaned, but we are here in greater numbers than the useless and contested 2000 census stated. Language barriers impede communication. If it weren't for the nonprofit media, how can we reach minority

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language communities? Who will cover our concerns?
People who don't speak our languages or live our lives?

I urge you to reconsider the Fairness Doctrine and
creating a fund to fight slap suits so that our local
media will have the courage to return to investigative
journalism and the mission of the fourth estate.

Thank you very much.

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Louise.

Fred Miller? Fred, you have two minutes.

MR. MILLER: Thank you. Good evening. My name is
Fred Miller. I'm celebrating 50 years of radio and
television. I started when I was 15, so you can do the
math. Thank you Social Security.

In 1970 I applied for, through the sale of a
station, a station in Portland. In 1970, the FCC
application required certain things. One of the things
they required was diversity of programming. So you had
to tell up front, as part of the application, what you
intended to do. We chose to do a couple of formats that
were not served, one of which was Christian programming
and the other was classical music.

Shortly after we were granted, a station in
Portland, WPOR FM, dropped their alternative or free-
form music. We had nothing going from midnight to 6:00,
so guess what, we put that on, too. So we were totally

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diverse, and the interesting thing is we paid income tax every year, which meant that we were able to operate at a profit. So you can serve the community, you can still operate at a profit.

In addition to that, at license renewal, we had to do ascertainment of community needs. Everybody hated it. Guess what, you learned a lot about your community by talking to the community leaders and a couple of hundred citizens at random. That's important. We need to bring it back. We need to bring back the Fairness Doctrine. We need to bring back ascertainment. And we need to bring back a three-year license renewal and a limit of seven radio stations to one owner.

Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Fred.

Warren Finney? Is Warren Finney here?

Emily? Is Emily Michaud?

Richard Dirck?

Susan Danforth?

Debbie Mathewson?

MS. MATHEWSON: Yes.

MR. ENSSLIN: Debbie, you have two minutes.

MS. MATHEWSON: I'm one of the thousands of people in Maine who can't afford cable, cannot afford digital

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or DirectTV. I'm confined to seven stations, and four of them are owned by the same company, so you've got repeats of the news. You get nothing. There is also censorship going on with these companies.

I've had a controversial show that was advertised going to be on all evening. It had something to do with gay youth. When the time came for that show to come on, all of a sudden Billy Graham's Holy Hour comes on. I mean, that was a real kick in the face. I called the radio -- the news station, said what's going on? You've been advertising this all day. They said, we planned on running it. The New York station said you're not running it and fed Billy Graham and cut it.

Now, that is taking away -- that's censorship and taking away local control. Another station, they were talking about doing a Congressional all day. There was a big thing going on, and there was -- some congressman was going to come out and talk. It was very unusual. Time came, nothing on this one station. I called up and said, you've been talking about how important this is. They said, the out-of-state station said we're not to run it.

So you cannot have this kind of censorship by our own TV and local stations for people like me that can't get this information. You're cut off at the knees.

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You're not getting anything. You should be concerned that our own people are censoring what you can get here in this state and what you can get in that state.

And tomorrow morning if you're here, turn on the radio stations. Go up and down the dial. You hear the same format: Two DJ's, the same news, top 40. Nothing is different. Turn it on tomorrow and go up and down the dial. But be concerned about the censorship, that they're calling up to Maine and saying you're not running that and feeding something else through.

Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Debbie.

Michael Vaughan? Is Michael Vaughan here?

Anthony Armstrong?

Nancy Akers?

MS. AKERS: Here.

MR. ENSSLIN: Nancy, you have two minutes.

MS. AKERS: All right. Nancy Page Akers is my name. My nonprofessional interest is in the area of civil rights and posttraumatic stress disorder relative to abusive censorship. We're living in a high tech era with science advancing too quickly for some people. The following concern pertains to TV stations switching to all digital. A quote from an FCC consumer fact sheet

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provided to me tonight in this auditorium: Quote, all digital broadcasting will free up many frequencies to be used for public safety such as police, fire, and emergency rescue, and for the provision of additional advanced commercial wireless services for consumers, close quote.

I find this statement interesting. First I'll explain why I think so. Lastly, I'll refer to the quote more specifically.

I've been living on the streets in the shelter for years. Falsely alleged a hate-monger, and I'm a victim of pro gay warfare, and I witness daily public safety keeping the streets safe. Thank God for honest cops.

Through technology and police presence, however, unfair mental health related censorship injures and alienates unfairly judged folks from the mainstream.

The media, which makes much noise caring about community, sort of joins community policing powers because silence is complicity when it comes to political correctness.

I refer now back to the quote I read. Police technology has the potential of worse abuse, when some day all digital broadcasting frees up, quote, unquote, many frequencies. Corporate police power, for example, may grow. Change can be good for public safety, but it

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can also bring negative change for those in local communities set up to be impoverished and to be overly studied by social services and by public safety.

Is the FCC prepared to stand up to a new world order of police power growing more, along with the freeing up of many frequencies? Caring can go too far. Is developing a homeless slave class a question of the digital era? Political exploitation of privacy may be winning the day with all digital broadcasting.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Nancy.

Is Nancy Bracket here? Nancy Bracket?

Joel Theriault?

Pat Bonsant? Pat, you have two minutes.

MR. BONSANT: Okay. Thank you all for being here. My name is Pat Bonsant. I'm the manager of Saco River Community Television. It serves 7 to 8,000 cable subscribers in rural Maine, western Maine. And I started off my career in media at a local ABC affiliate, and I went into it, I think, brimming with idealism. And a couple of weeks into the job one of the newscasters, a wild-eyed newscaster, came barging into the edit room and said there's been a massacre in Israel. Get me the goriest pictures you can. And at that moment, I realized everything that I had thought

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about what the media's mission was, wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

Public access allowed me to have Israelis and Palestinians and Native Americans, and they could speak in complete sentences for more than 30 seconds or the usual sound bite allotted. I just think it's a wasted opportunity if we let these stations go.

Thank you.

(Audience applause.)

MR. ENSSLIN: Thank you, Pat.

The last name I have on my list is Jon Hinck. Is Jon here to speak?

MR. HINCK: I am here. Thanks.

MR. ENSSLIN: Jon, you have two minutes.

MR. HINCK: Chairman Martin, the FCC, Commissioners, thanks very much for coming. My name is Jon Hinck. I'm an environmental lawyer, advocate, and State Representative for District 118 here in Portland. I have spent the last few days and hours of today trying to determine exactly what power and authority the FCC has in this matter, and what exactly you could accomplish here.

I think you've heard some very large concepts addressed by this audience, and I'm not sure whether you had the ability to grapple with those and make some